Negro state park sites are studied

MONTGOMERY, Ala., March 22 —(AP)—Tuskegee and Huntsville have been mentioned as possible sites for state parks for Negroes.

Conservation Director Earl M. McGowin told the legislative interim finance committee that Negroes have no vacation or recreation place in the state.

He said "This is a condition which cannot last. Otherwise difficulties will arise in some of the other state parks."

JEFFERSON COUNTY Rep. J. B. Morgan took the opportunity to ask: "The Negro Boy and Girl Scouts have nowhere to go like the white boys and girls, have they?" McGowin said that is correct.

The conservation director said part of Monte Sano Park near Huntsville, where an "excellent Negro college is located," is ideal for a Negro park.

Then he mentioned Tuskegee as a possible second site, and said his advisory board is already working on the proposed projects.

ATTWELL FUND MAKES
INITIAL 'REC' DONATION

New York-The initial gift of the E.T. Attwell Memorial Fund Committee, representing the Negro recreati n leaders of the c untry, was presented to the National Recreation Assn., at the thirty-third National Recreation Congress recently held in Boston.
Over 1,200 leaders from all over the country cheered as Mrs. Frances M. Parrish, popular and well-known leader of the Recreation Division, Louisville, Ky., who is co-chairman of the E.T. Attwell Memorial Fund Committee, presented a check for $2,075 at the banquet session of the congress.

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The income from the E.T. Attwell Memorial Fund, in memory of this noted recreation leader, will be used, as the principal increases, for the training of Negro recreation workers.

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Negro Parks Plan Given Legislature

By JIMMY BANKS
Austin Bureau of The News

AUSTIN, Texas, Feb. 8.—Equal but separate Negro park facilities valued at $1,116,000 can be established in Texas for $100,000, a committee reported Thursday to the Legislature.

The committee of three Senators and two Representatives was appointed a year ago to survey present facilities and recommend steps to provide parks for Negroes.

The report was signed by Senators Warren McDonald of Tyler, George O. Nokes Jr. of Corsicana and Crawford C. Martin of Hillsboro and Representatives Bill Daniel of Liberty and Albert M. Jones of Valley Mills.

Their plan would provide seven parks for Negroes and lay the groundwork for others.

A new park would be built for Negroes on a 116-acre site at the Lavon Reservoir, northeast of Dallas in Collin County. The committee said the site had been offered by the United States Engineers and that it could be turned into a first-class state park for Negroes at a cost of about $20,000.

Tyler State Park, now closed because of a suit filed by Negroes for admittance to all state parks, would be split up in order to provide equal facilities for Negroes. The committee recommended that the northwest portion of the 994-acre park be set aside and developed for Negroes. The committee said about $30,000 would have to be spent there to provide a small dam, roads, shelter, latrines and a disposal system.

The committee wants to turn over exclusively to Negroes the present Caddo Lake State Park in far East Texas. Lockhart State Park also would be given to Negroes, except for the golf course which is now operated by a club. In order to do that, said the committee, the state would have to purchase an existing building at a maximum cost of $10,000.

A new park would be built, under the committee's plan, at the Whitney Reservoir between Hillsboro and Clifton. The committee said the United States Engineers had offered a 500-acre site there and that a fine park for Negroes could be built on it for about $30,000.

Portions of Jossum Kingdom State Park near Mineral Wells and Stephen F. Austin State Park near Sealy also would be set aside for Negroes.

At Possum Kingdom, said the committee, present facilities on the east side of the park could be dedicated to Negroes without spending any money. About $10,000 would have to be spent, according to the report, to provide either a new white area or a new Negro area at Stephen F. Austin State Park.

The committee said it plans to obtain land for other Negro parks in the Beaumont area and in other sections of the state most heavily populated by Negroes.

The committee said its plan would provide Negroes with parks in areas of heavy Negro population and with the same sort of facilities available to white citizens.

Negro Park Plan to Get More Study

Special to The News

MARSHALL, Texas, Feb. 13.—A Caddo Lake State Park committee of the chamber of commerce plans further study of a proposal to make the park for exclusive use by Negroes.

The committee said Tuesday more public opinion will be sought before making recommendations to the State Parks Board on the proposal now before the Legislature.

The move to give Negroes complete use of the park came from a committee appointed last year by a special session of the Fifty-first Legislature. Other state parks were included in the report.

Chamber Manager Joe L. Mock said he understood the Legislature would not appropriate "one dime" for improvement at the Caddo Lake Park, but another board member said he thought the park board wants to appropriate $26,000 for improvements if the park is turned over to Negroes.

City Manager Oscar B. Jones Sr., former chamber of commerce manager, said he did not think the board would consider giving the land back to Harrison County people who donated it when the park was built in 1933.

Committeeman T. C. Solomon Jr. said he thought the suggested move was a good thing since the park is not used to a great extent. "We have the rest of the lake," he said, adding that many sportsmen have private houses at the lake and have access to all commercial fishing camps.

City Official Praises Negro For Work At Kings Hill Park

By ARNOLD SNOW

Kings Hill Park, a city recreation project for Negroes, is a monument to John L. Goodwyn, Associate Supreme Justice and former mayor, and members of the city commission, according to T. A. Belser, director of the Parks and Recreation Department.

If the park itself is a monument to the city officials, the spirit of the place calls for a tribute to John Hill, Negro caretaker, recreation supervisor, planner of programs and inventor of games, Belser said.

Seeking to do the most with limited appropriations, Hill manages to stir up enthusiasm, matching his own, among the young people who play at the park.

For instance, when the Park and Recreation Department offered to furnish paint for the community house at the park, Hill had no trouble finding boys who did the painting and did it well—in their spare time.

Gives Freely Of Time

Hill gives freely of his time and diverse talents, to keep the thousands of boys and girls visiting the park-playground happily occupied with one game or another. There is a smooth diamond with a new backstop, where two baseball teams take turns practicing. There is a big barbecue pit, with outdoor tables, for special occasions. There are horizontal bars and other gymnastic devices.

Each Friday, Hill conducts classes in drawing and modeling with clay and papier-mache. Sewing lessons are available for the girls and women.

Typical of the special programs devised by the versatile supervisor was a Mother's Day program, using talent found in the Kings Hill community, and featuring songs, music and speaking. Prizes were given to the oldest mothers present, and some 500 people attended. Another of the programs held during the current season was a pageant on Good Friday, re-enacting the trials of Christ on the day of his crucifixion.

Broom-Making

In addition to these activities, there are such games as checkers have classes in broom-making this summer.

If all these varied activities leave someone not occupied, Hill doesn't give up. He just sits down and thinks of a new game, using whatever materials he has on hand.

One of the games he invented calls for a few old tennis balls and a wooden bucket or keg. The trick is to stand a few paces from the bucket, which is sawed off on an angle, and throw the balls so they will remain in the receptable. It can be done, but it requires some skill and practice.

Pest House Site

Kings Hill Park, one of two maintained exclusively for Negroes by the city, has an interesting history. Years ago, before the use of vaccines for communicable diseases became common, the city's pest house was located there. Since vaccinations virtually wiped out such diseases as smallpox, the property was unused, though it still remained under public ownership.

When members of the Park and Recreation Board, and the city commissioners, started looking for a site for a park and playground to serve the 600 to 700 families in the Kings Hill area, they decided to use the 8.2-acre plot. Under the direction of John Robertson, associate director of the department, who has charge of construction, a playing field and dominoes in the wide veranda which reaches all the way around the building. Hill also plans to was graded. some of the old buildings were torn down, and a serviceable community house was built.

Response, on the part of the children in the area, was immediate and enthusiastic. Since the opening of the park, participation figures have jumped from week to week, dropping only when the weather made outdoor activities unpleasant.

Hill never feels that his job is completed, nor that he can sit back and coast on the developments he has already made, with the help of the department. He is constantly striving to make the park more attractive to the young people.

One of the things he is asking just now is a shop, where he can teach the boys woodwork crafts. The boys, who have seen him wangle all sorts of equipment for 'em, are confident he will get it.

Negro Residents In Brookland Ask Playground

D.C. Recreation Board Called 'Neglectful' of Children in Area

Residents of a colored residential area in the Brookland section of Northeast Washington, say the District Recreation Board is guilty of neglect in not providing playgrounds for their children.

More than 2,000 colored families live in this section of well-kept dignified homes.

In an effort to remedy this lack of play areas, six of their neighborhood organizations will appear before the Recreation Board at 1 p.m. tomorrow to ask that the three playgrounds in Brookland—Turkey Thicket, Noyes and Edgewood—be opened to all races. They are designated white playgrounds now, and always have been.

Heading a joint committee of the six organizations is Frank M. Snowden, Jr., who lives at 1227 Girard street N.E. He is director of the summer school at Howard University and head of the classics department there.

Small Area at School.

The only colored school in Brookland is the Slowe Elementary School. It has a small area that is being developed as a playground for colored children.

"Even when Slowe is developed, our needs will not be met," Mr. Snowden said. "It will be satisfactory only for small children, not the older boys and girls."

The organizations Mr. Snowden will represent before the Recreation Board are the Brookland Civic Association, the Slowe PTA, the Girl Scouts, the Fathers-Sons Club, the Mothers Club, the Garden Club and the Teen-Age Club.

Other groups to be heard are the Northeast Council of Citizens Associations, the Brookland Citizens Association, Michigan Park Citizens Association, Michigan Park Garden Club and the Veterans Civic Club of Brookland.

"Negroes have lived in Brookland for many years," Mr. Snowden said, "but there have been no provisions made for outside play areas for the children."

He described the indoor recreation program recently begun in Slowe School (built about three years ago) as "sporadic and inadequate." The playground outside is an "uncultivated goat hill," he added.

The Board of Education has advertised bids to develop a plot to the west of Slowe School into a playground. It will consist of about a half acre of surfaced area with playground equipment, intended for use of small children.

The development will cost about $40,000. The contract, however, will not be let until the budget now before Congress is passed. In the budget is the final $18,000 needed to allow letting of the contract.

The campaign of the colored residents to get a playground actually began as far back as 1937. But the fight did not start in earnest until the spring of 1949. At that time, the Slowe PTA, sparked by Mr. Snowden, began bombarding the Recreation Board with communications and requests for action.

Closed Meeting Planned.

At tomorrow's meeting, the board members will sit as a "transition committee," which is made up of all members of the body. The meeting will be closed to the public as the Recreation Department law allows the board to close committee meetings, although its board meetings must be open.

After the board hears the colored Brookland groups—and other groups opposing a change in the status of the three playgrounds—it will hear from Milo Christiansen, Recreation Department superintendent. He will present the results of a staff study and is expected to recommend one or more playgrounds in the District be changed to bi-racial units.

The Transition Committee is designed to consider areas of Washington where the colored-white ratio has changed to the extent that playgrounds may be changed in their racial designations to serve the community better.

The Recreation Department already operates bi-racial recreation programs at four playgrounds, at Cardozo High School and at its summer day camps. All of its activities on Federal park land also are without segregation because of a ruling of the Interior Department, the controlling agency of the Federal parks here.

Mr. Snowden said that, up to this point, all the communications and requests to the Recreation Board have brought the answer that the matter is under study and the board is aware of the need for colored playgrounds in Brookland.

"An awareness of need does not solve our problems," he declared.

He said the only sensible solution for Brookland is to open the three playgrounds to all races. The purchase of additional land for a colored playground would be "uneconomical and a waste of the taxpayers' money," he added, since the playgrounds there are adequate to accommodate all children.

Must Play in Streets.

"The present arrangement is that the colored children play in the streets," he said.

Mr. Snowden said the colored residents knew their children could play on the three areas legally, but that they want "official sanction." Although both races use the playgrounds now, the colored boys and girls are not allowed to take part in organized recreational programs or use the equipment furnished by the Recreation Department, he continued.

Turkey Thicket, the largest of the three playgrounds, is located at Tenth street and Michigan avenue N.E. It has few trees on it now, the name being a holdover from days long gone, and covers about three city blocks.

The Noyes playground is a spacious ground, basically designed for small children, and it is part of the Noyes Elementary School setup at Tenth and Franklin streets N.E.

The Edgewood playground is a large tract at Third and Evarts street N.E., near the rear of the Trinity College property.

The colored families in Brookland live mostly in an area south of Lawrence street and north of Rhode Island avenue. From the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad tracks to about Sixteenth street, the area is almost solidly colored. From Sixteenth street on out to Woodridge, the colored families are scattered. One colored community is located on Porto Rico avenue, just to the west of Turkey Thicket.

Above Lawrence street, the Brookland area and all beyond is almost entirely a white residential section.

Quiet, Dignified Neighborhood.

The colored section is made up of quiet, dignified streets and nice homes. They range from modest frame houses to elaborate residences in the upper-cost bracket. A large apartment development for colored families also is under construction about three blocks from Noyes School designed to house some 800 units.

Many of the residents are the professional people of the city's colored population. The area is the home of many doctors, dentists, lawyers, teachers and Howard University professors. Dr. Ralph Bunche, of the United Nations, once lived in Brookland.

The Board of Education also has had its episodes with the colored Brookland residents. When Slowe was built, the top floor was not completed and overcrowding developed shortly. The Slowe PTA called a strike and kept their children out of class in a demonstration designed to show the conditions there.

The top floor was completed this past school year and all is well as far as space is concerned for the time being.

Playground Awaits School Board Action In Bi-Racial Move

The District Recreation Board has approved its committee recommendations that three playgrounds be opened for bi-racial programs.

One of the playgrounds however, the Noyes School Playground, Tenth and Franklin streets N.E., will have to await action by the Board of Education, which has not yet voted to turn the playground over to the Recreation Board for use this summer.

Harry S. Wender, chairman of the board, at a meeting yesterday afternoon, complained of the non-action on the part of school authorities. He said the school board now must take action by polling its members, as there will be no meeting until fall.

The two playgrounds the board decided to operate on a bi-racial basis at once are the Raymond Playground, Tenth street and Spring road N.W., and the New York Avenue Playground, First street and New York avenue N.W. The Raymond will be operated by white personnel, and the New York Avenue, by colored employes.

The Recreation Board will continue to observe closely experiences in the bi-racial playgrounds in relation to the board's policy for the gradual elimination of segregation.

The board also requested the Commissioners to expedite the recommendations of Supt. Milo F. Christiansen that recreation jobs be reclassified by the Civil Service Commission and that a recreational analyst study the need for new facilities.

The board also ordered an analysis of the proposed transfer of Langley Junior High School to colored students in relation to the operation of the recreation unit by the department after the school opens in September.

Bi-Racial Plan at 3 Playgrounds Backed By Recreation Board

The District Recreation Board yesterday took action to open three playgrounds for a bi-racial program.

The board heard recommendations favoring the changes from its special committee on transition areas, composed of all board members. Statements from one white citizens' group and six Negro organizations at a hearing yesterday were unanimous in approving the changes. Final action will be taken at the board's next meeting at 2:30 p.m. Tuesday.

The areas to be affected are the Raymond Playground, at Tenth street and Spring road N.W., adjacent to the white Raymond Elementary School; the New York Avenue Playground, at First street and New York avenue N.W., near the colored Terrell Junior High School, and the Noyes School Playground, at Tenth and Franklin streets N.E.

School Board Must Act.

Board Chairman Harry S. Wender emphasized the change at the Noyes Playground is subject to approval by the Board of Education. Mr. Wender called a brief special session of the Recreation Board yesetrday during the transition committee meeting to approve sending the request for Noyes Playground to the school board.

This was done to speed the request, since the Board of Education will not meet again this summer and its action on the

Noyes request probably will have to be reached by a poll of board members.

Representatives of the Raymond School PTA inadvertently were not invited to yesterday's public hearing on the playground changes. As a result, a supplementary motion was tacked on to the committee's approval of the change, inviting the Raymond PTA to appear at Tuesday's board meeting.

To Reassign Personnel.

Approval of the board's request for use of the Noyes Playground during July and August as a summer operation will mean that one recreation leader each from Lucy Diggs Slowe and Langley Playgrounds will have to be reassigned to run the program there.

Under the transition committee's proposal, the bi-racial program at New York Avenue Playground will be conducted by Negroes. The "open area" at Raymond Playground will be run by white personnel.

Other playgrounds to be studied by the Recreation Department staff, under Supt. Milo F. Christiansen, for possible bi-racial operation are Turkey Thicket, Edgewood, Hoover, Rosedale, Sherwood and Trinidad Playgrounds.

The board also asked the District Commissioners to speed action on its request for a recreation analyst to make studies of population and racial composition of areas.

Groups Approving Changes.

Approval of the racial transition of the three playgrounds was expressed yesterday by Miss Cora Roy of the Citizens' Forum of Columbia Heights, the only white organization to appear at the hearing. Others who indorsed the action were M. E. Carpenter of the Armstrong High School PTA, Mrs. Leroy Outlaw of the Northwest Boundary Civic Association, Mrs. Portia L. Ware, representing the PTAs of the Cook School and Dunbar High School; Robert R. Brooks of the Terrell Junior High School PTA and William T. Thomas of the East Central Civic Association. A statement from the Raymond School Mothers' Association also indorsed the recommendations.

Mr. Christiansen has pointed out that all the playgrounds in question serve areas where Negro residents are increasing in number. Thus, it was pointed out, the board merely is giving its approval to a transition that already has taken place.

JACKSONVILLE'S NEW SWIMMING POOL—It's the new, $137,000 swimming pool for Negro citizens which was dedicated last week in impressive ceremonies in Jacksonville, Fla. This over-all view shows the Jefferson Street entrance, headquarters also for the local Negro police detachment. Concrete, steel and brick structure has been under construction for nearly a year. Overall size of building is 110 feet by 182 feet. First deck of the structure houses a recreation and refreshment lounge, locker rooms, comfort stations, police detachment headquarters and water supply controls. On the second floor are the entrance foyer, the pool manager's office, first aid room, lobby and control counter and spectator's and bathers' concourse. Formal opening will be June 2.

Hundreds Witness Ceremonies At Pittmam Park Dedication

To the applause of hundreds of community residents, the new Carrie B. Pittman Park was formally dedicated Saturday in a ceremony starting at two p. m. The program featured Rev. B. Joseph Johnson as principal speaker and Mrs. C. B. Wright as mistress of ceremonies.

Rev. Johnson recalled to the audience the days when "Pittsburgh" was a hot-bed of crime and lawlessness. He stated that he had seen the community develop from that status to its present status marked by civic pride, and self-respect.

He cited Pittman Park as being a significant and noble achievement in a community now characterized by a civic-minded populace of property owners and registered voters.

The assembled hundreds, most of them sheltered themselves from the sun's ray by umbrellas, also heard Mayor William Hartsfield. The mayor stated: "Pittman Park will be of great civic usefulness and will contribute to better citizenship in the community."

Commissioner Jack Towns, in an off-the-record statement, said that the park would ultimately prove the fact that "it's better to build boys than mend men."

The full program opened with music by the David T. Howard Band which performed at intervals throughout the program. The invocation was offered by Rev. G. W. Gideon. A "Word of Welcome" was brought by Rev. A. S. Dickerson, followed by official greetings from the mayor.

Remarks were heard from Roy Davis, Lee Evans, and George Simons—all representatives of the city government. Following a band selection, Mrs. Roberta Parks introduced Rev. Johnson, the principal speaker.

One of the highlights of the program was the presentation of Mrs. Carrie B. Pittman, for whom the park is named. She was introduced by Mrs. Ella Brown Wilson. At this time, the Crogman School Parent-Teachers Association presented Mrs. Pittman, past principal of the school, with a basket of flowers.

Atlanta civic and business leaders attended to bring greetings to Mrs. Pittman and the new park. John Wesley Dobbs, Grand Master of the Georgia Masons; J. H. Calhoun, business and organizational leader; Colonel A. T. Walden, prominent attorney and Prof. C. L. Gideon, principal of Howard High School—all brought messages at the dedication.

A presentation of the ministers present was made by Rev. C. Nathaniel Ellis. The ministers of the Pittsburgh area and the city in general are all on record as supporting the much-needed park.

After a brief address on "Pioneer Citizens" by Rev. L. M. Terrill, the benediction was pronounced by Bishop J. J. Hensley. The park committee included: Rev. B. Joseph Johnson, Co-Chairman; Rev. A. S. Dickerson, Co-Chairman; Mrs. Roberta Parks, Secretary; Rev. M. L. King, C. A. Scott, B. W. Wright, Rev. L. M. Terrill, J. W. Dobbs, Col. A. T. Walden, Dr. R. A. Billings, Rev. D. A. Dixon, Lee Evans, Roy Davis and George Simons

All during the ceremony, the park was giving visible evidence of how it was serving the community. Youngsters splashed happily in the large pool under the watchful eyes of full-time lifeguards. Other youngsters curiously explored the building and grounds—finding swings, teeter-totters, sliding boards and such other park equipment dear to the hearts of children.

Those who entered by big, beautiful central recreation building found a large, full-staffed refreshment stand, rest rooms, locker rooms, a big gym floor, ping pong and the offices of the recreation supervisor, Mrs. Sarah Lowrie.

Mrs. Lowrie is assisted by Elijah Poythress and Turner Sibley. The supervisor of the buildings and grounds crew is E. B. Fanning. The park was constructed at a cost of $400,000.

MRS. CARRIE B. PITTMAN, retired Atlanta School principal, who was honored Saturday during ceremonies dedicating the new Pittman Park, constructed by Atlanta and Fulton County in the southside section known as "Pittsburgh."

Mrs. Pittman was honored for her long period of civic work and tenure as principal of Crogman Elementary School.

CITY HALL NEWS

New Carrie Pittman Park Dedication Saturday

By HERMAN HANCOCK

Atlanta's newly completed $400,000 Carrie Pittman Park for Negroes will be dedicated with music and speeches at ceremonies set for 2 p. m. Saturday.

The Rev. B. J. Johnson will deliver the principal address. The Revs. A. S. Dickerson and B. J. Johnson will be co-chairmen.

J. W. Dobbs, grand master of Georgia Negro Masons; C. A. Scott, editor and general manager of the Atlanta World; A. T. Walden, attorney, and other Negroes active in passage of the 1946 bond issue which supplied the funds to build the facility, will be presented.

Mayor Hartsfield, Ald. Lee Evans, chairman of Council's Parks Committee, and Parks Manager George I. Simons, will make brief remarks.

A band from Atlanta schools will provide music.

Carrie Pittman served for years as principal of the Crogman Negro elementary school until her retirement. She will be honored in the ceremonies.

Pittman Park was built jointly by Atlanta and Fulton County. It is located on a 16-acre tract bounded by Windsor and Delevan Sts., West Ave., and the Southern Railway.

The park has baseball and soft ball diamonds, tennis courts, a modern swimming pool, play and picnic areas as well as a handsome recreational building. Construction required about two years.

rescinded its limit on the number allowed in the city will be considered at a meeting of the Police Committee at 7:30 p. m. Wednesday. Miss Helen C. Theodocion of 417 Pryor St., S. W., is asking that she be permitted to open a new store at 158 Hunter St., S. W. In addition, S. E. Parrott of 3005 Dale Dr., N. E., is applying for a permit to operate the Piedmont Liquor Store, 85 Forsyth St.

AUGUSTA, GEORGIA'S RECREATION PROGRAM is rated as one of the finest in the South. The photo shows swimming lessons being given at the Jones pool. These lessons are a part of the city's recreation and are offered free to children. Activities are varied and are handled by well-trained recreation department employees. Photo by Lampkin

Recreation Program On Tap In Augusta

By JULANIE LAMPKIN

AUGUSTA, Ga. — Recreation is taking the spotlight in Augusta now, as the town's citizens are all working together to develop a sound and enjoyable program of play for both young and old.

Some of the leading citizens are heading up the big recreation program for the benefit and amusement of those who like to play, and they are doing a top-notch job in the opinion of practically all visitors to the city.

The Recreation department will be laden with special activities in the near future. Teen agers and young adults will witness a musical duel which will be staged in the ballroom of the Ninth Street recreation center. The controversy will be between Alfred Pinckney and his Esquire Combo and the Barons of Swing.

The next feature attraction is the Joseph Lee celebration which will be held in the auditorium of the Ninth Street recreation center. This event is in cooperation with other cities in the U. S. in celebrating the birthday of Joseph Lee, considered by all recreation-minded individuals as one of the great pyramids of recreation.

Mr. W. T. Johnson, director for the Negro department of recreation is making every possible effort to make all these interesting events entertaining for the younger groups.

The Hillside tennis club officials are making plans for their annual club tournament whch will be held from August 6 to 8, at the Hillside Tennis club and Paine college.

The modern Jones swimming pool is one of the main features of the recreation department and is used daily by scores of citizens.

Verdery Roberson and Henry Daggett, both of whom hold senior Red Cross life-saver certificates, are in charge of safety. Prof. Hubert Wilson is pool director, while Mrs. Mattie Barker is in charge of the women's locker rooms.

Swimming classes for children under the age of 12 years and also teen-agers are now being offered at the swimming pool through the recreation department.

Included in the recreation program are several baseball teams. These teams, comprised of high school, college and young business men, play two or three games each week.

Another feature of the recreation department, is a wading pool and playground for the younger children, located at the Sunset Homes.

State Opens Negro Park In Lake Area

Western Kentucky Site Attracts 2,000 Visitors

By HARRY BOLSER
Staff Correspondent, The Courier-Journal

Kentucky Lake, Ky., May 30.—Cherokee State Park, the first Negro recreation area provided by the State, was opened here formally this afternoon.

Some 2,000 Negroes from throughout Western Kentucky frolicked in the shade of the park grove, boated on placid Kentucky Lake and swam in its cool water.

There were group picnics throughout the area adjacent to the pretentious bathhouse overlooking Kentucky Lake, but the crowd closed in on a speakers' platform at 1 p.m. for a program marking the opening of the park. The program was sponsored by the Cherokee Sportsmen's Club, composed of Negro leaders in lower Western Kentucky.

Park Merely 'Opened'

Dr. G. A. Davis, Paducah physician, presided. He said the club wanted it understood the park was not being dedicated today, but merely "opened."

"There still are some phases of the park project under construction and we will not have a formal dedication until they are completed," he said.

Principal speaker was Henry Ward, Frankfort, State commissioner of conservation.

Ward said Governor Lawrence Wetherby authorized him to assure Western Kentuckians he is "keenly interested in the full development of Cherokee Park and it will continue to have his support."

Segregation Is Topic

"I'm a person who speaks straight from the shoulder," Ward told the crowd. "The question of whether parks of this type should be built is one that is subject to continuing debate in the nation.

"Those of us charged with the responsibility of developing a park program for Kentucky do not claim that we have the final answer. But there is one thing that is clear and that is that while the debate over segregation rages, the colored people of Kentucky are entitled to a park they can enjoy without confusion, conflicts, or race riots."

Thinks All Equal, He Says

The conservation commissioner said he holds to the belief that in a democracy every may stands equal before God.

"And some of these days the fight for segregation will be settled," he added. "But until it is, I feel it is the obligation of the State to provide equal recreation facilities for all of its people.

"Colored leaders of this area have indicated by their interest that they prefer a park of their own that their people can enjoy now than to wait until the segregation problem has been settled."

Dr. T. R. M. Howard, head of the friendship clinic, Mount Bayou, Miss., a Murray native, spoke afterward and commended the conservation commissioner's remarks.

Better Than Mississippi

He said also, "I think Kentucky is making much more progress than Mississippi in providing educational and recreational facilities for its Negro citizens."

In the invocation, the Rev. L. W. Mundy, pastor of Paducah's Washington Street Baptist Church, admonished the gathering to "struggle ceaselessly that the better things in life will be ours."

The State has spent $150,000 on Cherokee Park. It comprises a 400-acre tract north of U. S. 68 on the Marshall County side of the lake.

The recreation and picnic area is in a heavy grove of oak, hickory, and ash trees. The grounds sweep sharply down to the lake edge.

View Is Attractive

The elevation affords one of the most attractive views of the lake in the Kentucky Park area.

The cottage-type bathhouse, with its concrete-terrace shower baths and convocation rooms, overlooks the lake. Just below the bathhouse is the lake swimming area. In Billy's Branch, one of the many lake inlets, is the Cherokee boat dock.

Eventually, the State plans to erect overnight cabins in Cherokee Park. At present the water and sewage systems are being installed. Pete Rutledge, Murray, is park superintendent.

Cherokee Park is reached by an access road which intersects U. S. 68 at Aurora. The State also plans to blacktop this road.

New Recreation Events Announced for Negroes

Two new events for Negroes were announced yesterday as part of the County Recreation Board's summer program.

Camp Kool Breeze for Negroes will be operated at Newburg July 9 to 20. Camp Summerlong, for whites, will be open the same dates at Valley Park. Registration has started for both.

Negro boys and girls will be asked to join a Camp-on-Rails tour to Detroit, similar to the Camp-on-Tour to Canada for whites. Dates for both will be announced later. The trips will include a week at the two camps.

Charlie Vettiner, County recreation director, announced that a Small-Fry Fishing program will be held at an unspecified date at Tom Wallace Lake. Small children from various playgrounds will be instructed in casting and fishing.

First event of the summer program will be opening of Valley Park and Valley Swimming Pool May 30. The other 31 playgrounds will open June 7.

Teen-agers will present "Chuckles of 1951" on June 28 at Iroquois Amphitheatre. Funds raised will help pay for the Camp-on-Tour.

A playground beautification program will start June 8 and run all summer. Communities and the board will share expenses.

The "Pageant of the Forest Queen" and Water Regatta will be staged July 4 at Tom Wallace Lake. The Junior Olympiad Village, combining athletic and camping contests, is slated July 26 and 27.

Judge Hints He'll Rule 'No Bias' at Iroquois

Shelbourne Hopes To Have Decision In Week After Studying Petitions on Links and Parks

Federal Court Judge Roy M. Shelbourne yesterday indicated he would rule that the City of Louisville has not discriminated against Negroes in the operation of Iroquois Park Amphitheatre.

The judge said he wanted to study further the issues involved in petitions to admit Negroes to City parks and golf courses before reaching a decision.

At the end of a hearing on the suit to open the recreational facilities to Negroes, Judge Shelbourne said:

"Up until today I had intended to rule that Negroes have the right to play golf on these municipal courses. There not only are not equal golf facilities for them; there just are none."

New Points Raised

But, Shelbourne added, there had been some points of law raised at the trial that might make him change his mind. He said he hoped to give a formal opinion within a week.

The trial involved complaints of three Negro citizens. Dr. P. O. Sweeney, dentist, 524 W. Walnut, charged he was not allowed to play golf on City courses. Mona Carroll, daughter of attorney Alfred M. Carroll, stated she was barred from fishing at Cherokee Park. James W. Muir, a University of Louisville law student, complained he was denied the right to buy tickets to Amphitheatre shows.

The plantiffs were represented by Benjamin F. Shobe and James A. Crumlin, Louisville attorneys, and Robert L. Carter, New York, representative of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Amendment Is Quoted

They argued that in all three cases the Negroes' rights had been violated under the 14th Amendment to the United States Constitution, which provides that no state (or city) shall deny "any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

On the Amphitheatre question, Shelbourne said it was the Louisville Theatrical Park Association, a private agency, and not the City, that had refused to sell tickets to Negroes. The association contracts with the City for use of the Amphitheatre.

Carter argued that the park association, in actuality, is a City agency. The organization puts on shows on premises built, owned, and maintained by the public, except for an original $5,000 supplied by the association, he said.

Some Rights Reserved

The City only reserves the right to see that reasonable admission prices are charged and that wholesame entertainment is provided, Carter said.

Donald Q. Taylor, association attorney, contended that the association is a nonstock, nonprofit, private organization "providing entertainment at its own expense and under its sole supervision." The City virtually has little to do with the operation, but does get any net profits under the agreement, he said.

Taylor cited a recent decision of the United States Supreme Court to support his argument that the association was not violating Negro rights under the 14th Amendment.

Private Interests Exempted

In civil-rights cases, the Supreme Court said, "The principle has become firmly embedded in the constitutional law that the action inhibited by...the 14th Amendment is only such action as may fairly be said to be that of states. That amendment erects no shield against merely private conduct, however discriminatory or wrongful."

Gilbert Burnett, head of the City Law Department, and Robert W. Meagher, assistant City attorney, presented the City's case.

Meapher argued that Federal Court should dismiss the Negroes' suit on the basis of a similar suit already decided in Kentucky Courts.

Lost Earlier Suit

In a suit brought by Sweeney in 1947, Jefferson Circuit Judge Lawrence F. Speckman ruled that the City had not infringed upon Sweeney's rights in barring him from City golf courses. The Court of Appeals affirmed the decision. Sweeney later dropped plans to appeal to the Supreme Court and filed a new suit in Federal Court.

Meagher contended the two suits, in effect, were one and the same. The Supreme Court, he added, has held that a "decision of the highest court of the state is conclusive and binding on a federal court operating in that state."

Carter replied that the two Sweeney suits involved separate incidents entirely. The suit decided by the Kentucky courts resulted from the City's refusal to let Sweeney use golf courses in 1947. The suit now before Federal Court resulted from a similar refusal in 1949.

New Decisions Made

NUew court decisions and changes in constitutional law favorable to the Negroes' cause prompted the second suit, Carter said.

Police Chief Carl Heustis said he could not foretell the outcome of allowing Negroes and whites to use the same parks in certain sections of the city. Such action could put an added burden on the Police Department, already short on manpower, he said.

City Parks Director T. Byrne Morgan testified that parks and recreational facilities were proportionately equal for both races. He read a 1928 Park Board resolution setting apart Chickasaw and other parks for Negroes.

'Not Desirable or Safe'

The resolution stated it was "not desirable or safe for whites and Negroes to use the same parks and swimming pools."

Morgan said there were no Negro golf courses "because there never were any requests or demands." Most courses are sponsored by an organization or a group of citizens, he explained.

"If the Negroes demanded an amphitheater, I would recommend one," Morgan said.

Attorneys for the Negro plaintiffs argued that the Supreme Court has held that Negroes are entitled to the use of available public facilities now, and no demand for separate facilities is necessary.

DEMOCRACY AT WORK:

Harmony Reigns in Public Parks, Afro Survey Shows

BALTIMORE

Large crowds of colored and white citizens enjoyed the city-owned golf courses, July 15, the first Sunday since the Park Board rescinded its un-American ruling requiring segregation of races on the links.

The dire "racial disturbances" predicted by the board and held out as the reason for the ruling, failed to materialize.

An AFRO spot survey of municipal golf courses and parks showed that not a single "incident" occurred as a result of the integration.

On the six playgrounds designated for interracial use, youngsters set the pace for democratic living by playing together harmoniously, bringing to mind the Biblical quotation "a little child shall lead them."

At Carroll Park where the Monumental Golf Club was holding a tournament, Sunday. 67 colored golfers and 44 white golfers played during the day. Last Saturday 62 colored and 60 white players used the links.

An attendant at Carroll course said the number of golfers using the links each day is now becoming more evenly distributed between the two races.

When the races played on separate days, the white days usually brought 100 golfers to the course and on "colored" days from 30 to 50 would play. Now the daily total runs between 90 and 115, about half of them colored players.

Clifton Park

There were no colored golfers at Clifton Park when the AFRO visited Sunday, but some 300 white players were on the course.

At Mount Pleasant golf course, seven colored players were among the 337 golfers enjoying the sport at 5 p.m. Shortly afterwards a driving thundershower forced them to flee for cover.

Interracial play was the rule rather than the exception this week, at the six playgrounds designated for such activities.

Children of both races play together at Easterwood Park throughout the day and Miss Ardonia Snowden, recreation leader there, said "They get along just swell."

As Miss Snowden talked with this reporter, eight-year-old Arnold Spivac, white, of 2016 Bentalou St., came up to ask for a board so he could do some woodwork.

"He's My Buddy"

He was accompanied by Harold "Sonny" Jennifer, 7, son of Harold Jennifer, Bureau of Recreation supervisor. Arnold told the reporter his name and address and then volunteered this information:

"This is my buddy, Sonny, we're gonna write our names in clay on some wood."

Miss Snowden returned with the wood and the youngsters sat down together and went to work on their project.

Two colored boys in the room were playing ping pong, three others stood watching and making pertinent, boyish remarks.

Outside, a young white man sat on a bench reading the newspaper account of the Walcott-Charles fight. His sleek red convertible coupe stood at the curb.

On another bench two colored boys sat in the shade, enjoying snowballs and taking a brief rest.

A gray-haired white man, his arms comfortably folded across his rotund mid-section, sat sleeping on a bench.

City Springs Playground

This peaceful, typically American scene was duplicated at Eden and Lombard Sts. where the playground known officially as "City Springs," but called "Spring Gardens," by the children, is located.

Three girls played in the swings under the mid-day sun. But most of the children, 28 to be exact, played under a long shed in the center of the playground.

Their activities were supervised by Mrs. Emily Bryant, recreation leader. Asked how the children played together she said:

Blend Right In

"They just blend right in together. The white children come and join right in whatever activities are underway."

The children were playing cards, or darts or checkers. Two white boys, about eight years old, came up and asked if they could "play bean bags." Mrs. Bryant said they could, and the boys busied themselves by immediately starting the game, which consists of attempting to throw the bags through holes in an upright board.

WEEK BY WEEK

Missouri State Parks Segregate By Race

by Scott Pride

THE MISSOURI State Park Board has an unwritten regulation forbidding mixed Negro and white groups from using any state camping and recreation grounds. That is the word of Abner Gwinn, Chief of State Parks.

The matter came to my attention recently when I learned that the Boy Scouts of the Central Missouri region had planned a summer encampment under a new plan in which Negro scouts would be included for the first time. Everything had advanced satisfactorily until the state camping grounds were about to be engaged.

Then it was discovered that the great state of Missouri, through its Park Board membership, does not want whites and Negroes making use of state property together. The forward-looking project of the Boy Scouts of the Central Missouri region there and then went up in thin Missouri smoke.

There are four members on the State Park Board: Gov. Forrest Smith; J. E. Taylor, Attorney-General; I. T. Bode, director; and Gwinn.

Gentlemen's Agreement

Being a faithful resident of this commonwealth, an owner of Missouri land and property, a taxpayer, a state employee, and a regular voter, I followed the course of any citizen and inquired about this practice. I wrote Abner Gwinn for a set of regulations governing the use of state parks, with a specific request that any special regulations affecting the use of these parks by colored citizens be included.

I received from Gwinn a copy of "Missouri State Park Rules and Regulations" which set forth provisions for camping, fires, protection of shrubbery, swimming, car speeds, hunting, fishing and what-have-you. A brief letter, saying here it is, came along with the set of do's and don'ts.

In the reply that came from the State Park Board chief there was nothing referring to colored people. So I called the Park Board office and asked to speak with Gwinn. I cited the failure of the letter to elucidate on any special state park provisions for Negroes.

He stated over the phone that the Negro is not barred from using the state parks and that there is no written regulation limiting the use of the parks by colored and white citizens. However, he stated, there is an unwritten gentleman's agreement among the four Board members to the effect that colored and white may not use the state property together. He stated further that colored people may use any of the parks at any time but that few of them had been making use of the state parks at all.

State Inconsistencies

Well, there you are. The state does not forbid race mixing in its parks by law, but the four-man State Park Board sets up a gent's pact decreeing that there shall be no white-Negro fraternizing on this Misouri state property. It says, like the restaurant or tavern proprietor or like the owner of any privately-possessed enterprise: "We reserve the right to seat our customers."

The state of Missouri allows Negroes and whites to do many things together. It does not forbid them living side by side on any street. It allows Negroes and whites to eat together at the lunch counter in the capitol building in Jefferson City; it allows colored students to eat with whites, study with them and recreate with them at the University of Missouri; it allows colored and white to sup, work and play together at Lincoln University, a state school. Colored and white wash out of the same face bowl in the capitol, sit side by side there at hearings, drink out of the same water fountain.

41a 1951

New York

Courier-Journal Photo

TEACHING "ANATOMY"—a game—to City playground ledaers Jean Daugherty, left, and Patricia Lauderdale is Mrs. Vivian Collins, playground supervisor, right. Watching from the slide are Robert Grider, 13, of 633 E. Jefferson, left, and Roy Karem George, 10, of 2221 Grand. The scene is at a training institute for playground leaders yesterday at the East Louisville Recreation Center.